

BIG IT UP BULLETIN

Major news and updates for Leicester and Leicestershire

FEBRUARY 2011

Here is the latest update for Big It Up campaigners on major projects and good news stories for Leicester and Leicestershire, brought to you by Leicester Shire Promotions.

If you have any more Big It Up stories to tell of how you, your colleagues or organisation have championed the cause of Leicester and Leicestershire, please feed appropriate details through to Simon Gribbon at Leicester Shire Promotions on 0116 225 4001 or email simon.gribbon@l-p-l.com

Annual conference will bring £2 million to local economy

Leicester has emerged triumphant as the location for the national Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) annual conference in 2013. A local bid team, led by Leicester Shire Promotions with partner organisations including Athena conferencing centre, Curve theatre and Ramada Jarvis Hotel, successfully pitched to host the three-day conference from 20-23 March 2013. More than 800 FSB members are expected to attend the conference which is estimated to contribute around £2 million to the Leicester and Leicestershire visitor economy.

This will be the first time that Leicester has hosted the prestigious annual conference in its 20 year history. Leicester Shire Promotions co-ordinated the local bid team to win the nomination ahead of other shortlisted destinations including Brighton and Bournemouth.

Officially the best UK market (again)

Leicester's market has been named Britain's favourite for the second time in three years. The award was given by the National Association of British Market Authorities following an online public vote. Every year more than 2.5 million people visit the market, which is more than 700 years old.

Comedy Festival receives Queen's telegram for its 18th birthday

Leicester Comedy Festival has received a message of support from Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II. Festival organisers received a letter from Buckingham Palace which states: "The Queen sends her best wishes to all concerned for a most memorable and enjoyable event." This latest message of support comes after other people have sent best wishes to the organisers and performers. Ed Vaizey MP, Minister for Culture, Communications and Creative Industries sent his support saying: "I am extremely pleased to hear that Leicester Comedy Festival is celebrating its 18th birthday. To reach this landmark is a clear indication of how well the festival has been run over the years and how much it is appreciated by both performers and audiences alike. On behalf of the Government, I would like to wish all those involved this year a successful festival, and here's to the next 18 years!"

Local hotels and restaurants listed in new Michelin guide

Leicester and Leicestershire restaurants and hotels feature prominently in the new MICHELIN Guide Great Britain & Ireland 2011. The publication is one of the most prestigious guides to eating out in the UK and 17 pubs, restaurants and hotels from the city and county feature in the latest 2011 edition. The listing of the venues in the guide means that, according to Michelin inspectors, they serve good food and/or offer impressive levels of comfort. In addition to its general listing, the Red Lion at Stathern was also awarded a prestigious Bib Gourmand ('good food at moderate prices').

National press coverage states 'Leicester shows we can live together'

Following Prime Minister David Cameron's recent speech when he claimed state multiculturalism had failed because different cultures had been encouraged to live separate lives, the Daily Mirror published a major article on Leicester, reflecting on how the city is a multicultural success story -

www.mirror.co.uk/news/politics/features/2011/02/07/leicester-shows-we-can-live-together-even-if-david-cameron-talks-about-failure-of-multiculturalism-115875-22904514/

Dominoes Toys named best in country

Dominoes Toys has been named the best independent toy store in the country. Based in Leicester, the business picked up the honour at the annual Toy Industry Awards - organised by the British Toy and Hobby Association and the Toy Retail Association. The Dominoes internet business, MailOrderExpress now ships to more than 20 European countries and more than 150,000 online shoppers are registered online with the company.

Historical Foxton on Channel 4

Leicestershire's rich history will be examined when Channel 4's Time Team TV series previews its 'Saxon Gold, Saxon Death - Foxton, Leicestershire' episode at 5.30pm on Sunday 13 February.

Local Dragon joins the Den

Leicestershire entrepreneur Hilary Devey is to join the team of business gurus for TV series Dragons' Den, replacing James Caan. The businesswoman built up a multimillion-pound empire after launching her firm Pall-Ex in 1996, selling her car and home to fund it. Hilary, who runs a pallet distribution network, will join returning Dragons Bannatyne, Peter Jones, Theo Paphitis and Deborah Meaden. The series, in which budding business tycoons present ideas to bid for investment from the Dragons, has been commissioned for a further three series.

Britain's top-selling big bike-maker

Triumph Motorcycles in Leicestershire has become Britain's top-selling big bike-maker again - nearly half a century after it last ruled the roads. The Hinckley company overtook foreign rivals Honda, Suzuki and BMW to take pole position for the first time since its 1960s heyday. It comes after the firm reported a rise in the number of bikes it sold in the UK last year, while its three competitors suffered sharp falls. Experts put Triumph's success down to the quality and range of its bikes and the higher cost of the euro and Japanese yen.

Former Loughborough Sports Scholar is a record breaking World Champion

Former Loughborough University student Dan Greaves has claimed a gold medal, and a new world record, at the IPC Athletics World Championships in Christchurch. The Athens 2004 Paralympic Champion defended his World Championship title in the F44 discus with a throw of 58.98 metres, beating his previous best by over three metres. Dan completed a Masters degree in Sport and Leisure Management in 2009, having graduated from the University in Sport and Exercise Science in 2006.

Making a date for award win

A calendar designed by a Leicestershire firm has won an award. Paper merchant Antalis McNaughton's 2010 calendar won the Fred Kendrick Award for the best bespoke calendar at the National Calendar Awards. It was designed by Stock Taylor Benson, of Grove Park, Enderby. The theme of the calendar was communication through the ages. Each page was printed on a different paper stock, with different treatments applied, to demonstrate the breadth and versatility of Antalis McNaughton's range.

International travel magazine recommends local spa

A local spa has been picked out as the second best retreat in Britain. Ragdale Hall Health Hydro and Thermal Spa, based in the countryside at Six Hills, near Melton, picked up the honour at the annual spa awards. Places were chosen by readers of Condé Nast Traveller magazine.

Spatial Group is extra special

A business has picked up an award from the British International Freight Association for its high quality service. The Spatial Group, based at Willow Farm Business Park in Castle Donington, won the special services award at the association's 22nd annual lunch. It picked up the honour after judges praised it for providing an efficient freight service transporting life-saving products for patients with medical conditions who want to travel overseas.

Author wins awards on tour of India

Historian and author Bobby Singh Bansal has picked up a string of awards in India. The Syston author, whose book, *The Lion's Firanghis*, studies the lives of Europeans who lived in 19th century Punjab, visited India with his wife and family to launch the book. During the trip, he attended and won awards at three ceremonies - the Glory of India Awards, the Global Punjabi Society (GPS) Awards and the Non-Resident Indians organisation's awards.

GENIE wins international award

GENIE, the University of Leicester's Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning in Genetics, is part of a team that has won the Grand Jury Award at 2WAYS, a major European Life Sciences Festival organised by the European Science Events Association (EUSCEA) in Brussels. The prize was awarded to GENIE and its collaborators for a board game developed to explain the principles of DNA mutation. The Mutation Game can be used in the classroom or at science events and its first version is based on mutation and evolution. Set on an alien planet the Evolution Game shows 'evolution in action' in a very short time.

Royal visit commemorates 160th anniversary of Dickinson & Morris

Ye Olde Pork Pie Shoppe received an honorary Royal visit from Their Royal Highnesses The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall as part of Dickinson & Morris' 160th anniversary. The Royal visitors were given a tour of Ye Olde Pork Pie Shoppe and practiced their baking skills by hand making an authentic Melton Mowbray Pork Pie. During their visit to the area Their Royal Highnesses also visited Long Clawson Dairy and undertook other local public engagements including a visit to Launde Abbey, the retreat house for the Dioceses of Leicester and Peterborough.

Best Best Western in the land

Local Ullesthorpe hotel, Best Western Ullesthorpe Court Hotel & Golf Club, triumphed over fellow independent hotels from across the UK to claim the title Large Hotel of the Year 2010 at the Best Western Hotel of the Year Awards. The momentous occasion was the finale of the Best Western Annual Member's Conference - the largest annual gathering of independent hoteliers in the UK.

And finally...

The Big It Up Bulletin is produced in conjunction with Leicester Mercury's 'The Business' supplement. For the latest business news in Leicester and Leicestershire, visit www.thisisbusiness-eastmidlands.co.uk/News/Leicestershire.aspx

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